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# Recent Crises Have Obscured Kennedy's Radical Changes In National Security Council

## Task Forces Substituted for Planning Staff and Operations Board to Get Faster Action—Some Gaps Are Seen in Organization.

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THE STORMS CREATED by the Berlin crisis and the earlier Cuban invasion fiasco have obscured the radical changes President Kennedy has gradually made in the structure and scope of the National Security Council, the highest policy advisory agency in government.

Whether these changes will be adequate for the long range planning necessary for combating aggressive Soviet imperialism is questioned by those who see the present organization relying heavily on numerous task forces to supply advice to the President about emergencies developing throughout the world.

THE COUNCIL was created under the military unification act of 1947 and its present statutory members are President Kennedy, who presides at the meetings, Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara and Director of Civil and Defense Mobilization Frank B. Ellis.

In practice, in this and previous Administrations other officials participating have included the Secretary of the Treasury, the Attorney General, the Budget Director, the director of the United States Information Agency, the director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others when their particular problems were under discussion.

Under Presidents Truman and Eisenhower, there were elaborate subsidiaries for submitting plans for consideration by the council and the President for checking the actual operations to see that approved plans were followed by various departments and agencies.

One of President Kennedy's first acts affecting the NSC was to abolish the operations section, called the Operations Co-ordinating Board and to substitute temporary task acting task forces.

Less publicized was his recent abolition of the council's planning staff which had prepared studies and in many cases recommendations for the council and the President's formal approval. Again, task forces were substituted, with a single individual, either a Cabinet officer or a high-ranking White House or Cabinet subordinate responsible for the presentation of a study, with alternatives, to the council.

THE OFFICIALS designated to supervise the operations and planning forces were McGeorge Bundy, former dean of the arts and science faculty at Harvard University, and Walt Whitman Rostow, professor of economic history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The latest change was the reorganization of Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization to transfer the operation of the civil defense shelter program to the Defense Department with greatly increased federal, local and private expenditures.

What was the OCDM will become a much smaller unit, to be known as the Office of Emergency Planning.

The next scheduled change is a reorganization of the Central Intelligence Agency and the replacement of Director Allen W. Dulles by Fowler Hamilton, a New York lawyer with governmental experience in the Truman and Eisenhower Administrations.

President Kennedy, by accepting personal responsibility for the Cuban debacle, refused to let the CIA be made

responsible for the Cuban debacle. He asked Achilles to keep an eye on things in that area. After it was clear that the invasion was a devastating failure, he called Achilles to his office to say he had been given the green light for the creating of a 24-hour-a-day "alert" unit to be quartered in the executive office building across the street from the White House.

As part of the CIA reorganization, the Defense Department will co-ordinate its intelligence operations around Oct. 1 under the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who will report their studies and evaluations to Secretary McNamara. At present, the Army, Navy and Air Force have their own units whose functions, in part at least, overlap, with duplication of machinery and personnel. Although the final unification has not yet been worked out, McNamara recently indicated that the staffs of each service would be cut down and the Joint Chiefs would build their own operating unit in addition to the evaluating group. He said that the central office would turn over whatever political intelligence it obtained to the CIA and that the CIA would refer to the Joint Chiefs whatever military intelligence it obtained during the course of its undercover operations. He said this is already the current practice.

THE KENNEDY Administration has added an innovation to the NSC, an operations or alert center, and has revived a Roosevelt-Truman institution, a military adviser to the President, in this instance, the appointment of Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, former Army Chief of Staff, as "presidential military representative" for foreign and military policy and intelligence operations.

The Laotian and Cuban situations were responsible for the establishment of the "Operations Center," headed by Theodore C. Achilles, a high-ranking foreign service officer, whose previous assignment was that of ambassador to Peru.

While the Laotian difficulty ranked high in State Department concern, Secretary Rusk was riding to the White House to confer with the President about it. He asked an accompanying official whether certain military plans had been carried out. The Secretary was shocked when told that orders relating to a

had been countermanded.

A week before the Cuban invasion became dangerous to American interests, he asked Achilles to keep an eye on things in that area. After it was clear that the invasion was a devastating failure, he called Achilles to his office to say he had been given the green light for the creating of a 24-hour-a-day "alert" unit to be quartered in the executive office building across the street from the White House.

With Achilles as the chief, the unit has 14 members, an elaborate communications system and authority to call any official anywhere at any time. Around the clock at least one experienced State, Defense or Intelligence officer is in charge.

At the two days of background briefings on international affairs in the State Department auditorium held this week for several hundred newspaper men, magazine writers and radio-tv commentators from all parts of the country, officials who may not be named emphasized that Laos, Cuba and Berlin were only the first of a long series of difficult situations to be expected and if possible to be anticipated in a long cold war.

While still fearful that a thermonuclear war would make the future of the human race uncertain, the officials pointed out that for long-range planning the important facts to be considered were:

1. Soviet Communism's active pursuit of its world-wide aims for years to come.
2. The breaking up of the former colonial empires in Africa and the Middle East has been caused by rampant nationalism in the industrially underdeveloped countries with little experience in self-government. The Russian and Red Chinese governments have promised their help in "wars of liberation."
3. The development of new weapons, atomic and thermonuclear, with new means of delivery by supersonic planes, by rockets and submarines.
4. The recurring American deficits in the balance of international payments which limit our actions in deploying our own forces overseas and in giving

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bestseller?